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BY
ROBERT COLLINS
and
W. Y. SHEPPARD



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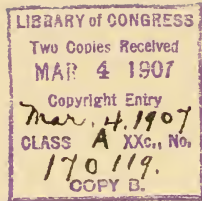
to

Mr. and Mrs. Monroe R. Collins, Jr.,

By the Authors.

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PART I.

WORK OF ROBERT COLLINS.



J. H. MANNING

TAPS AND REVEILLE.

TAPS.

The bugle call of taps rings through the air
And echoes from the hills, the soldiers march
With bended heads unto their silent camp,
The cavalry gallops from the setting sun,
And halts, dismounts and seeks their needed rest ;
The stars and stripes descend with stately grace,
The cannon bellows forth its deep good night,
And then the call sends forth its last sad notes
And bids the darkened camp a long farewell.

Oh, when there blows the last deep call of taps
That bids us to that dim and unknown camp,
In which we find our last dark resting place,
We, too, shall march with bended heads, to rest,
To sleep a sleep of vague and sacred dreams ;
So when the bugle call has died upon
The air and bade the world a long farewell
We all shall be in deep and solemn sleep.

REVEILLE.

The sharp, clear notes of reveille sounds through
The silent camp and gives the brightening hills
A shrill good morning call. The flag ascends
In beauty and in state, and catches in
Its folds the first bright light of day; and as
The morning gun sends forth a welcome shot,
Battalions on battalions pass from out
The fast retreating darkness far into
The rising sun, the cavalry gallops forth
To meet the coming dawn, and, as they pass,
The first of day arises from the night.

We, too, shall hear the call of reveille
That wakes us from our solemn sleep and bids
Us from the dim and darkened camp unto
A happy camping ground of lasting day;
So when the sharp, shrill notes have bade us wake,
The darkness died into spreading light,
We then shall form our ranks and march from out
The night of death into the dawn of life.

THE POET.

The poet finds wise truths in everything,
And is well read in nature's solemn laws ;
He knows what lies behind misfortune's smile,
And all there is in sorrow's sullen laugh ;
He makes the heart his little world, in which
He sows what he has reaped from out the fresh,
Green garden of his mind, and speaks unto
The soul of Love the great, wise truths of God.

THE DREAM OF TIME.

'Tis sweet to dream the dream of time and pass
Into the world of memory, to meet
Therein the mystic forms of other days
And say to them: "Oh come, my brothers, come,
Come hide yourselves in me and speak unto
My heart of all the might and all the love
Which once was mine. Oh stay with me until
My God shall pluck you gently from my breast
And whisper unto me: 'Oh go thou now
And strive to find new hope, new strength, new love.'"

It's art to write some wond'rous masterpiece,
Within whose dark and melancholy tints
The genius' brush has brought forth Nature's charms,
The beauties of the dim and stately trees
And all the sweetness of the growing flowers;
It's art to write some deep and classic song,
Whose music speaks of mystic summer tunes;
It's art to write some great and mighty verse,
Whose words can play the organ of the soul
And turn the saddest sigh into a smile;
But unto me there is an art of arts,
An art that lies within my inmost heart,
A hope that speaks throughout my dearest dream,
A great and wond'rous art that is above
All art—the sacred art of mighty love.

MARY.

Your voice is the music of waters
That dance and ripple away,
Your laugh like the winds in summer,
Your smile like the dawn of day.

Your heart, it is simple and loving,
The beauty that dwells in your eyes
Is light from the sun of the morning,
Is light from the summer skies.

Your hair has the tint of the shadows,
Your cheek has the glow of the rose ;
Oh Mary, my princess of flowers ;
Oh Mary, my queen of the snows.

THE MUSIC OF LOVE.

I heard the solemn organ play the deep
And holy music of a hymn, at first,
So soft and low, like sighing of the winds,
And like the weeping of the autumn pines ;
Then, note on note, it grew more loud and deep
And note on note it rang more beautiful,
Until it sounded like the moaning woods,
Or like the swelling music of the sea ;
And then it climbed the beauty of its height
And filled the air with deep and solemn tones.

Oh, Mary, my deep love for you grew in
My heart as did the music of that hymn ;
At first it was but faint and low, but tone
By tone and note by note, it grew more deep,
More holy and more beautiful, until
It climbed the glory of its height and filled
My heart with all the music of great love.

THE FADED FLOWER.

Within the pages of an old, old book,
I found a crushed and faded flower, a rose
Of bygone summer days. And as I held
It gently in my hands, it told me tales
Of long forgotten times, of wond'rous springs,
The chirp of birds, the melody of winds,
Of her who plucked it from the flow'ry field
And bade me wear it always near my heart.

Oh, often as we open up the book
Of life, we find within its musty leaves
Some worn and faded flower of memory
That speaks to us of sad and joyous days—
Perhaps it is some faded rose of hope,
Perhaps some violet of an old, old love.

THE DYING FIRE.

The fireplace flames that once so brightly burned
Have slowly sunk into an ember bed
That glows and lives in reddish beauty and
In golden hues, and throws a ruddy light
Upon the darkness of the walls and turns
The shadows into strange and ghostly forms ;
But still each burning coal throws out its warmth,
And still each tiny flame lives on and glows
Within the darkened shadows and the shades,
And paints a picture with its golden hues.

An old, old love that lives within our hearts
Is like the dying fire ; it throws its pure
But fading light upon our souls, and turns
The many shadows that arise therein
To ghostly forms of ones whom we have loved ;
And as the tiny flames arise, then fall,
They paint upon the darkness of our hearts
The golden pictures of old days.

THE GREATER LIGHT.

There is a story in the darkest night,
There is a poem in the deepest shade;
The golden stars that shine from out the crest
Of heaven upon the darkness of the world—
Are burning thoughts of hope that shine from out
The heaven of our souls upon the shades
And shadows of the heart. The moon that looks
Serenely down is sacred truth and faith
In God. The clouds that drift like phantom ships
And cast their darkness on the silent earth
Are sorrows that arise within our breast,
And drift like mystic forms within our lives.
The light that creeps from out the distant east,
So silently, so slowly on, whose glow
Is ruddy glory mixed with golden hues—
That first bright herald of the mighty sun—
That, that is deep and sacred love.

THE FIRE-PLACE.

The flames within the fire-place rise and fall ;
And cast their light about the floor, and melt
The shadows into gold. Then one by one
Sink back from whence they come, to fade within
The darkness of the room, while others rise
And take their place, as if each sought to see
Which one could shed most light and give most warmth,
So as to make my room a home-like place,
And fill my heart with sweet and homely love.

Within the fire-place of our lives, as we
Arise and fall, we, too, should shed some warmth
And glow and seek to light the shadows of
The earth ere we sink back from whence we came,
To lie amid the vast and unknown shades,
While others rise and take our place ; yet all
Of us who've done our best, have helped to fill
This world of ours with love's true warmth and light.

A VIOLIN.

Last night I heard a soft-voiced violin
Sound forth the music of an old love tune.
Some strange, some weird and wordless melody ;
It played so softly sweet, so deeply true,
It seemed to hush the harsher sounds of night
And whisper music with the sighing winds ;
Each note spoke out a passion of the heart,
Each tone spoke out some melody of love ;
And then it softly died away, and bade
The stars good-bye—the night a long farewell.

But, still, oh love, this music brought upon
Its wings a sweet, dear memory of you ;
The tune was but an accent of your voice,
The melody was but an old, old dream ;
It told of when we walked at twilight's hour ;
It whispered music of the brook we loved,
Where we would stand when evening's times grew near ;
It told of that last silent night we stood
Beneath the mysteries of the moonlight's glow,
And I did bid to you that last farewell
And you to me a trembling, fond good-bye.

THE LIGHT THAT GROWS.

The young, vague moon arises in the dark
And solemn sky, and seems at first but small,
But faint, but dim ; yet, when the nights grow from
The nights, the days roll from the days, it does
Become more large, more bright, more beautiful ;
Until at last it ages to its full,
And throws a cloth of gold upon the earth,
And fills the heavens and dims the stars with light.

And thus it is with some great deed of love ;
At first it seems but small, yet when it goes
From year to year, from age to age, it, too,
Becomes more great, more beautiful, until
At last it fills the hearts and souls of men,
And all this great, wide globe, with hope and truth.

THE FLOWERS OF LIFE.

A thousand golden sunbeams softly creep
From out the bosom of the mighty sun,
And look throughout the clouds of heaven upon
The Earth, and touch the shadows into light,
And make the birds to sing their morning songs,
The summer flowers to gleam and shine like gems.
They make the stately oak to spread its limbs
And stretch its mighty roots about the earth,
And bare its million leaves unto the winds.

Oh Father, thus we pray to Thee that we,
Like sunbeams from the sun of life, may look
From out dark sorrow's clouds upon the world
And turn the shadows into golden light,
And make the flowers and trees of life to grow,
The great and sturdy oak of manly truth,
The pure, white rose of godly faith and hope,
The violet of sweet, kindly words and deeds,
The strong, white lily of undying love.

A PICTURE.

It is the picture of an evening scene ;
The moon has reached its full and casts its light
Upon a dark and melancholy pool,
The trees stand grim and still against the dim
And solemn sky, and throw their shades upon
The waters ; and the spirit of the night
Looks over all, and lives in every shade
And shadow ; all seems touched with sorrow's brush ;
And everything is silent, still, and vague.

I know, O artist, what is written here,
I read the story that your brush has wrought ;
This still and solemn pool, it is your soul ;
This moon that shines upon its waters is
The thought and memory of some old love,
That looks and shines from out some sorrow's cloud
Once more upon your soul ; these dim old trees
Are sad and silent thoughts that brood within
Your breast—this night, this darkness is your dream.



PERHAPS.

Last night, when darkness lay about the world,
A robe of shadows was upon the earth,
T'was then, O friend, O comrade of my heart,
That you and I walked down that silent road
Through flow'ry meadows and through grassy fields
And through the dim, soft shadows of the night,
While arm in arm we whispered out our tales—
The brightness of the sun of yesterday,
And all our hopes that waited for the dawn.
But when our limbs grew weak, our eyes grew dim,
We sank upon the grass to rest, to sleep.

Oh friend, Oh brother of my heart, just when
The last dim twilight steals about our ways,
We'll walk another road, a long, broad road,
That leads to endless fields, while heart to heart
We'll whisper stories of our younger days
And tell the history of our greener years;
But when this twilight fades into that last
Dark night, and we have come unto those endless fields,
O brother, then we'll lie us down to rest—
Perhaps we'll wake to meet some brighter day,
Perhaps we'll sleep a dark, untroubled sleep,
Perhaps, perhaps we'll dream.

THE FLAG.

The Stars and Stripes, waving upon the winds,
Unfurls its colors to the mid-day sun ;
The glory of its red, the beauty of
Its white, the heaven of its sacred blue.
And as it flows so proudly side to side
And floats upon the waves of every breeze,
It seems to whisper to the East and West
The story of a strong and wond'rous land
And all the hist'ry of a mighty race.

O flag, you hold upon your sacred robe
The legends that you whisper to the winds.
The red that lies upon your seven stripes
Shouts out unto the world the sad old tales
Of vast, great battles fought, and of the blood
Your truest sons let drop for freedom's creed.
The soft, pure white that marks your breast
Seems whisp'ring to the air the story of
An age of peace, the legends of great deeds ;
The holy blue that lies upon your crest
Speaks softly to the hearts and souls of men
Of heaven and the lasting love of God.



TO A GLASS OF WINE.

I drink to you, oh sacred wine, to you
The liquor of the grape, the quencher of the heart ;
For you hold in your sparkling depths the ghosts
And spectres of a thousand smiles, the last
And dying echoes of a million laughs ;
You drown our deep and burning thoughts of hope,
You sink our faiths in Godly love, and you
Revenge life's wrongs with sorrow's lasting dream.

But, still, I drink this toast to you, for you
Do lead me to the vesper of my dreams,
You light my way through memory's darkened halls ;
And, then, oh wine, you lead me gently on,
Until we reach the cavern of old loves ;
And there you let me stay, to think and dream
Of one whose voice can rule my inmost heart—
Of one whose eyes can sway my soul.

THE BOOK.

Like some old man that sits at midnight's hour
Within his fireplace glow, and reads from out
Some pond'rous book of vague philosophy,
And turns the yellow pages, one by one,
Until at last he marks the page from whence
He stops, and lays the book aside and seeks
His nightly rest, while some near brother comes
And reads from where he ceased to read, until
At last *his* eyes grow dim and *he*, too, marks
His place and enters in the world of dreams.

Ah, thus it is with the great book of life ;
For all of us do read our measured part,
And then we leave our mark upon the page
And enter in the undiscovered land
Of shades, while still another race moves on
And reads of what we left unread, and then
They mark their page and go unto their rest—
Oh, who shall read unto the very end ?

TO MY MOTHER.

Sweet are the thoughts of love,
 So warm, so pure and true,
When at the evening times
 I sit and dream of you.

I hear your voice so low,
 Like music far away ;
I hear your words of love,
 Like some old melody.

And when the twilight's dim
 And night has come so near,
I see your sad, kind face
 Look down upon me here.

With eyes so deep and true,
 With face so fair and sweet,
Is my last view of you
 Before I sink to sleep.

GOD IS LOVE.

Oh Mary, as we walked at twilight's hour
Amid the beauties of the still, dark woods,
And listened to the music of the stream,
I thought and dreamed that God was everywhere ;
I dreamed His voice was in the rustling leaves,
His heart was in the river's flowing breast,
His kindness in the gentle summer winds,
And that His truth was in the silent stones.

But, Mary, when I looked within your eyes,
Those mysteries of light and shade, I found
The God I sought, I saw the God I dreamed ;
For He whose heart is in the river's breast,
And He whose voice is in the ocean's roar,
Whose majesty is in each blade of grass,
Held court within your eyes of blue, and swayed
My heart, and ruled my soul with gentle love.

THE DREAM.

I dreamed last night the Master stood beside
My bed, and with His gentle voice did bid
Me wake and follow Him; and then I dreamed
We walked through grassy fields and darkened woods
Beneath the old moon's golden glow, until
At last we came unto the shadows of
A silent city of the dead, where there
Were many stately tombs and lowly graves,
And there were mighty names upon the stones.
And then we paused before some ill-kept mound
'Neath which some old, forgotten poet lay.
And then the Master said: "Behold the grave!
Look on this lowly house of death, in which
There lies forgotten dust of one whose heart
Went out for men, whose sweet and simple songs
Were sunbeams for the night-times of men's thoughts,
And helped to ease a thousand heavy hearts—
Behold his lowly rest!"

And next I dreamed we stood beside the tomb
Of some great warrior of ages past.
And then I thought the sacred Master said,
"Look on this high and stately tomb within
Whose silent vault there lies the honored dust
Of one who fought ambition's selfish fight,
And one who shed men's blood that he might rule
And have a lordly name, and one who turned
Men's gentle love to deep and fiery hate,
And helped to make a million dying souls—
Behold his stately grave!"

THE SHADOWS.

Just as the twilight steals about the earth
And all the mysteries of the night look down,
I stand beside a dark and silent stream
And watch the shadows that the dusk has wrought
Upon its waves. Oh shadows of the night,
You hold within your dark, stern depths the scenes
And visions of past years, you make me dream
The dream of time, while in my heart there throbs
The blood of memory ; you are to me
A volume of dead hopes, a poem of
Old loves, a hist'ry of wrought deeds ; you form
The grim, gaunt specters of past time and make
The dark and ghostly faces of old friends.
And as I look and dream with you, Oh shades !
The waters of this stream seem whisp'ring to
My heart: "These are the things of yesterday."

THE GHOSTS OF YEARS.

Deep in the kingdom of the heart there dwell
The phantoms of dead years. They rise and come
Like subjects from the world of time, and speak
The legends of an age. They whisper strange,
Dark stories of old hopes and deeds, and bring
Before the eyes the shadows of old loves,
And many scenes of long departed times ;
They tell unto our inmost souls the long,
Sad tales of what is passed, and what is dead.

But, still, these sacred ghosts of years give to
Us all a little strength and love. If we
Are gray with age and bent from time, they make
Us young again and teach unto our hearts
Strange hopes and learned truths ; they seek to do
Us good, and wipe old tears and make new smiles.

TO THE MASTER.

Like winds in summer sighing,
Like rumbling of the sea,
O true and master poet,
Are your sweet songs to me.

They tell of love and sorrow,
They sing so soft and low,
Of many sweet old stories
That speak of long ago.

They whisper of the summer,
They tell about the spring,
The brightness of the sunshine,
The mysteries in the moonlight,
The good of everything.

PART II.

WORK OF W. Y. SHEPPARD.

Dimly first my eyes beheld you,
As a perfect stranger might,
Seeing in you just a woman
Passing pleasing to the sight.
Cold I judged you from your manners,
Leaving love to weaker hearts ;
Feeling nought of stormy passions
That the burning kiss imparts.
Never once through years of meeting
Did I think would be my greeting
When we meet at morn or night,
All a-tremble with delight.
"Sweetheart of mine."

Moonlight made the magic colors
Through which I beheld your soul ;
Seeing all its warmth and beauty,
Not a fiber that was cold.
Long I gazed, entranced, enraptured,
As a blind man, given sight,
Stands dumbfounded on the threshold
Of a sweet, new world of light.
Though some merciless tomorrow
Measure me my meed of sorrow,
Yet I, like the blind, shall hold
Treasured sunlight in my soul.
"Sweetheart of mine."

I 'woke and frowned. The world grew gray,
And as I went along my way
I saw upon each face a frown ;
Not one kind word fell on my ear,
And even friends, when I drew near,
Greeted me with a frown.

I 'woke and smiled. The world grew gay,
And as I went along my way
I saw upon each face a smile ;
Not one hard word fell on my ear,
And friend and foe, when I drew near,
Greeted me with a smile.

I lit the lamp ; and dropped the match,
To think of it no more,
Until, when the next morning came,
I found it on the floor.

Then, stooping down, I picked it up.
That bit of black, charred stick
Had changed its worth since yester-night,
As by some magic trick.

I valued it ; for had it not,
Before it burned away,
Kissed into life with its last breath
A stronger, brighter ray ?

Forgive me, love, if I am sad tonight,
And can not answer, as of old, with smiles;
My heart is heavy, and the pain beguiles
The happy word and puts the smile to flight.
I speak of love—how have I earned the right
To tell you this? Between us stretch the miles
My steps may never count. Weakness defiles
And puts to shame ambition's vaunted might.

But still I love, in spite of all I know;
And still I hope, though hope itself be wrong;
The world may claim the battle for the strong
And deem it right to lay the weaker low;
But David sped a stone against his foe,
And won the heart of Saul with simple song.

Last night the darkness held me round about,
And strange fears clasped themselves unto my heart;
At every sound my trembling flesh would start,
And all my bravery was put to rout.
At last, far down the road, I heard a shout,
Half song it was, but lacking music's art,
Yet holding in its tones the richer part—
Sweet fearlessness of all within and out.

Swiftly they came, the ringing song and stride.
Until the singer passed me in the night,
And yet the darkness hid him from my sight.
"How walk you, friend, so fearlessly," I cried;
"You bear no lantern in your hand or crest?"
"I bear," he said, "my lantern in my breast."

He sent her the whitest flowers that bloom,
Hoping she'd understand;
For white is the symbol and seal of God,
The mystic mark of his hand.

Behold the verdant trees, the azure sky,
The fields aglow with life, the river there,
Dappling with sun-kissed light and shadow, where
A thousand fish their sportive pleasures try.
Behold the city with its steeples high,
Beneath whose domes a restless multitude
Labor for love or lust, one, all imbued
With pulsing life, that dreams not death is nigh.
Tomorrow! and behold, we see them not.
The hills are lakes, the level fields are thrown
To massive mountains, on whose summits play
The sunbeams that once on the meadows shone.
Tomorrow; and today is gone—forgot;
And lo, we are the things of yesterday.

A roof of deepest azure,
A carpet spun of green,
A breath of incense wafted
From censer swung unseen.

The wash of sun-kissed water,
The flute of hidden bird,
And thoughts defying utterance
Of human tongue and word.



Time, ravager of all that human hand
Has ever shaped to beauty or to worth ;
Grim desolater of the halls of mirth,
Relentless scourge of every clime and land ;
Time, at whose stern and pitiless command
Cities have crumbled back into the earth,
To mix their dust with those that gave them birth ;—
Time, count your slaves, a-tremble where they stand.

But I ! I fear you not. Secure in place,
I shout defiantly into your face :
“Drive on, ye years ! your chariot wheels shall wear
Ruts in eternity, ere they shall grind
Beneath their tires one atom of the mind
That the great God entrusted to my care.”

The Tree-of-Life was red with fruit,
The Garden gay with flowers,
When Eve and I as lovers spent
The happy, happy hours.

Softly the wind sang its refrain,
The nodding trees kept time,
While our true hearts, in fond embrace,
Beat to Love's sweetest rhyme.

The Tree-of-Life is sear and bare,
The flowers are faded and gone,
And Eve and I stand far apart,
Unhappy and forlorn.

Harshly the wind soughs overhead,
The raven flops his wing,
And our two hearts are turned to stone
Beneath the serpent's sting.

Clear, sharp and shrill the horn's blast cleaves the air ;
Deep-tongued, the pack assemble at the meet,
Where neighing horses whirl on dancing feet,
And brawny men smile down on women fair.
Hark there ! The opening bays the valleys fill.
Sharply the whip and spur the hunters ply,
And onward dash to where the hounds now fly
A screaming streak of color 'cross the hill.

Gaily they quaff the wine, and tale on tale
Relates the vict'ry of the morning's race ;
A woman's hand displays the honored brush ;
Deep in the wood, where pine and cedar wail,
A mangled body, "Trophy of the chase,"
Lies still and cold beneath the dark night's hush.

I've read what your hand has written,
And kissed it again and again,
With a heart overflowing with sweetness—
The sweetness of love, and its pain.

With sweetness because of your loving,
Your trust and your loyalty, too ;
The free-spoken speech of your passion,
That echoes my passion for you.

With pain because I'm unworthy
Of the love that you lavish on me,
A love that I know is as lasting
As the years of eternity.

Whatever the future is bringing,
God grant me this favor of life—
Make the woman whose letter I'm kissing
Forever my sweetheart and wife.

Fate held for me no rainbow tints
 Until I gazed into your eyes,
To see therein far richer hues
 Than ever decked the skies.

The earth sang not unto my ears
 Until the magic of your voice
Bade all the sleeping chords of life
 In holy strains rejoice.

The sea was evil to my sight
 Until its waves embraced your form,
To sanctify its breathless calm
 And purify its storm.

Now earth and sky and sea relate
 The sweet, strange story of our love,
And softly shines the echo back
 From every star above.

I walked in the garden of life one day,
With the fragrance of flowers around,
With eyes so dazzled from colors so gay
They saw not the dun of the ground.

The pink exhaled the soul of its bloom,
The violet scented the air ;
But the red rose offered the sweetest perfume—
And I plucked me a rose to wear.

The tulip paraded its crimson and gold,
The hyacinth, too, was there ;
But passing the radiant beauties by,
I chose me a lily fair.

I compared the two when my walk was done,
Then sighed for the never-shall-be,
Wishing the lily and rose were one
In passion and purity.



Some love as carelessly as when
The year is in its spring
And ev'ry child of earth and air
Throbs with desire to sing.

Some love with an intenser fire,
And rival summer's sun
In scorching up the dew of life
Ere day has scarce begun.

Some love with Autumn's mellow breath,
That golden time of year
When fruit and grain are yellow, with
The harvest drawing near.

But give me love, like Winter, held
In hardship's grim device ;
For love is truest, sweetest when
For love we sacrifice.

Rock-ribbed, the earth curves mile on mile away,
Teeming with life in every shape and form;
With thunderous roar, the sea, lashed by the storm,
Hurls to the skies its angry spumes of spray;
Through high-banked clouds, clad in its soft array,
The moon looks calmly down on sea and hill;
And soon earth, ocean, heaven will feel the thrill
That heralds the approaching king of day.

Admire, weak man, these wonders all combined,
Measure your sickly life, short at its best,
With all the mightiness that you behold;
Then inward turn your gaze, therein to find
Beauty and power transcending all the rest,
God's greatest handiwork—inmortal Soul.

“What wouldst thou have?” a fairy asked of me,
“Fortune and fame I have at my command,
The power to rule on every sea and land—
Choose thou thy wish through all eternity.”

She paused; but ere her voice had died away,
“These things are good,” I said, “still I would pray
Thy richest gift—for love's eternal day.”

I hear the roar of wheels, the ceaseless jar
Of traffic on the dense-packed street below ;
The rumbling of the passing, crowded car,
The throb of feet as on and on they go.
I look. A pale-faced woman struggles up the street,
Wet-browed, bosom a-sag from child's long suck ;
A carriage speeds along, upon the seat
A pompous, well-fed man, the son of Luck.

You left at home a babe, who waits to feed
Upon the thin, warm milk within your breast ;
You bowl along, soul occupied with greed,
Careless of all those wants the weak confess.

Then shall I fear to speak in word and line?
Great God! when will you cry, "Revenge is mine?"

Hour after hour I sat and pondered long,
Weighing this creed 'gainst that, and doubting all,
For all seemed weak. Then I at last, forlorn,
To my inmost soul sent forth a call,
To bring me proof if there were heaven or hell,
And show me here, unto my mortal eye,
The living proof that should at last compel
My lips to cry: "I can not now deny."
And, lo, my soul rushed forth on lightning wing ;
And at my bidding journeyed earth and sky,
Until it found that which I bade it bring.
Then it returned, and with exultant cry
Laid in my arms the one I love so well,
And said: "In her find all your heaven and hell."

When evening comes with shade and shadow-light,
And that soft stillness settles on the fields,
And all the coarser landscape gently yields
To the mysterious magic of the night ;
Behold the day, made clearer to the sight ;
'Tis then we see the hero of the hour
Was but a little thing compared in power
With just one smile that tuned one heart a-right.

So, Love, it shall be when we stand at last
Upon the twi-lit border land of life.
How small will seem the years of selfish strife,
The vain vexations of the vaunted past !
How large the loved-deed and the kindly word
That healed a heart by hate or anguish stirred !

When many, many years have sped away,
Sweeping a-down their wide, resistless tide
The children's children of the child today,
And half they thought forever would abide—
When cities yet unbuilt shall proudly rear
Their pinacles above the nameless dust
Of those who now can start a nation's fear,
And make or break, at will, a nation's trust;
Still shall you live! as beauteous of face
As even now, with eyes as light as day;
With form unrivaled in its slender grace,
The peer of any beauty holding sway;
For Love shall weave into immortal rhyme
Your beauty's spirit for eternal time.

Can word of man, with all its subtle art,
Wash from your lips the kisses I implanted,
Or quench the fire I lit within your heart
When breast to breast and lip to lip we panted?
Can all the man-made laws and bonds, I say,
Bind you so fast another's legal bride
That mem'ry will not steal your heart away,
Again to throb in rapture at my side?

Impossible! Not man, with all his might,
Can chain the mem'ry of a single kiss;
Nor bind within the stillness of the night
The wild, but rapturous, dream of bygone bliss—
Nor can the marriage rites a priest has read
Divorce the hearts that God himself has wed.



Life brewed for me a bitter draught of rue,
And bade me drink in token of defeat:
But love smiled in the cup, and ere I knew
My lips were quaffing nectar, honey-sweet.

We journey o'er the desert waste of Life;
Sand hill on hill obstructs our weary way;
Afar the sharp horizon, like a knife,
Cuts off from view tomorrow's hope and strife.

Thirsty we are, and panting for the spring
That somewhere flows beneath the palm-tree's shade;
Our swifter hopes outspeed our strides, and wing
Their way to the oasis' shady glade.

Love, shall my steps, plodding from sun to sun,
To slack this thirst when the long journey's done,
Reach ever that sweet goal my hopes have won?

A street black-peopled with a surging crowd,
Each bent upon the busy thoughts of life,
Of mart and mole, commercial gain and strife;
A shriek, far-heard, but penetrating-loud;
And then a sudden pause of man and mass—
Hark to the crash of hoof, the clang of gong,
The sharp, shrill blast that warns the eager throng:
"Room there!" "They come!" With might and main
they pass.

A ruin smold'ring dark and sullenly,
A group of men spent with the fiery fight,
A white-face throng that gaze upon the dead;
Tomorrow, and the old scene greets the sight,
Another structure swiftly rears its head,
Forgotten those that sleep eternally.

Magical, Mystical, Mighty,
Kings of the yesterday,
Where is your power and purple,
Where is your sway?

I've asked of the thunder and lightning,
When clouds hung low in the sky ;
I've asked of the sun on the meadow,
Ere the dew was dry.

Though they've crashed in the caverns of knowledge
And smiling their banners unfurled,
They've answered me ever and ever :
"They are dead to the world."

Lovers of love and its longings,
Poets of the yesterday,
Where are the songs you were singing,
Love and its lay?

I've asked of the winds at their wildest,
When I heard not the sound of my cry ;
I've asked of the sun in its glory,
When it dazzled my eye.

And in language of laughter and learning,
The answer has ever been this :
"Though we know not the rhymes they have written,
They live in a kiss."





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